

Exhibit A

Murphy Letter dated 10/8/21

*John Richard C. King
First Vice-Chairman*

*Christopher J. "Chris" Murphy
Chairman*

*Neal A. Collins
Second Vice-Chairman*

Judiciary Committee

*William H. Bailey
Justin T. Bamberg
Beth E. Bernstein
Bruce M. Bryant
Micajah P. "Micah" Caskey, IV
Neal A. Collins
Westley P. "West" Cox
Sylleste H. Davis
Jason Elliott
Russell W. Fry
Patricia Moore "Pat" Henegan
Max T. Hyde, Jr.
Jeffrey E. "Jeff" Johnson*



**House of Representatives
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Christopher J. "Chris" Murphy
Brandon M. Newton
William Weston J. Newton
Seth Rose
Ivory Torrey Thigpen
Elizabeth "Spencer" Wetmore
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*Roland Franklin
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Staff Counsel*

October 8, 2021

Delivered via email

Steven Lance
NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund, Inc.
40 Rector Street, 5th Fl.
New York, NY 10006

Dear Mr. Lance:

I write in response to your letter of September 27, 2021 and this letter will also serve to supplement my response dated September 3, 2021 (copy attached) to your letters dated August 9, 2021 and August 30, 2021. While I respectfully disagree with a number of the comments in your letters, I would specifically note my disagreement with any suggestion or implication that the Ad Hoc Redistricting Committee ("Ad Hoc Committee") of the South Carolina House of Representatives has engaged in a process that has been anything less than fully transparent and demonstrably fair. We nonetheless appreciate the interest shown by you and your colleagues in the redistricting process and sincerely appreciate the input provided to date.

As you are presumably aware, the Ad Hoc Committee has traveled across the state over the past month conducting eleven (11) separate public hearings in ten (10) different locations across the state, with the last two hearings held in Columbia and offering virtual participation to the public. This Ad Hoc Committee has conducted more public hearings than any similar committee in South Carolina's history of redistricting, and has heard and considered public testimony from citizens and interest groups from every region of the state. During those hearings, Chairman Jordan has answered a number of the questions posed in your correspondence, and so I will summarize to some extent the information that he has provided to the public at the hearings. I would also note that the hearings themselves are available and can be viewed on the House's Redistricting Website ("Redistricting Website"), which can be found at <https://redistricting.schouse.gov/>.

In addition to the public hearings, I assume you are aware that written testimony and proposed maps may be submitted through the Redistricting Website, which are additional options for public participation in redistricting and an additional means to interact with the Committee members other than the public hearings. As noted and as has been publicized in multiple public notices, the last two public hearings held in Columbia offered virtual attendance and the opportunity to participate via Microsoft Teams. In addition, the Committee will continue to accept proposed maps submitted by the public at least until the map room closes on November 5, 2021.

In addition to the input of the public, the input of the South Carolina House members (“House members”) that represent their constituents is also essential—and so as has been done in the past, each House member will be afforded time in the map room to draw and propose new district lines for the district they currently represent, as well as other districts. In the map room, the House member will be able to see how the population has shifted since the 2010 Census and will be able to propose a redraw of district lines in order to try to achieve substantially equal populations. The map room opened on the morning of Monday, October 4, 2021--and as noted during public hearings, it will be available to House members and delegations by appointment until at least November 5, 2021. The Ad Hoc Committee will post on the Redistricting Website a date after November 5, 2021 when the Redistricting Website will no longer receive public submissions.

As has been repeatedly noted in public hearings and otherwise, the job of the Ad Hoc Committee is to produce an initial draft plan and present it to the Judiciary Committee, a committee of which I have the honor of serving as Chair. The goal of redistricting is for each South Carolina House district to have “substantially equal” populations. Based on the results of the 2020 Census, the ideal population of each House district is 41,278.

After the map room has closed, the Ad Hoc Committee will develop and propose a draft plan that will be posted on the Redistricting Website for public review and comment prior to action by the Judiciary Committee, hopefully by late November, 2021. The Judiciary Committee will then proceed to consider and approve a plan for consideration by the full House membership. I understand that the full House may return for a special session to consider the redistricting plan at some point in December, 2021—please be advised that as soon as any dates concerning this process are finalized, those dates will be posted on the Redistricting Website.

As you know, the historical timing of redistricting activities has been delayed substantially by factors well beyond the control of anyone in the House—namely, the belated release of final population data by the U.S. Census Bureau. Despite these delays and the continuing challenges attendant to a pandemic world today, the Ad Hoc Committee and the House Judiciary Committee are fully committed to the continued pursuit of a redistricting process that is fully transparent, maximizes public engagement, and to develop a plan that protects and preserves the voting rights of all South Carolinians.

Once again, we thank you for your input. In closing and as noted in earlier correspondence, I again suggest that you continue to monitor the Redistricting Website, as a close review of the information available on that site should answer most of the questions that can currently be answered by the House about its redistricting process. The Ad Hoc Committee will continue to update the website and continue to use that platform to: (1) notify the public about redistricting activities that will take place in South Carolina; (2) obtain valuable public input; and (3) make sure that that our process is transparent to all South Carolinians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Chris Murphy', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Christopher “Chris” Murphy, Chairman
House Judiciary Committee